

ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed October 6, 2006 has been carefully considered. Within the Office Action Claims 81-111 have been rejected. The Applicants have amended Claims 81, 96, 107. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejection under U.S.C. § 102

Claims 81-111 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,642,469 to Hannaford et al. (hereinafter “Hannaford”). The Applicants respectfully traverse.

According to the M.P.E.P., a claim is anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a), (b) and (e) only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.

Hannaford describes a pen-based direct-drive manipulator 10 which enables precision manipulation and force display at a control point 12. FIG. 2 of Hannaford describes the system allowing an operator to insert a pen or other tool 14 into the control point 12 and apply forces/displacements to the control point 12. The manipulator 10 responds to the applied forces allowing control point 12 movement with three degrees of freedom within workspace 16. The invention in Hannaford includes a complex linkage coupled to the control point 12 which allows the control point 12 to move along with the tool 14.

In contrast, an embodiment in Applicants’ specification is directed to a planar sensor which is stationary or fixed, whereby movement of the pointer 162 along the surface of the planar sensor is detected to provide the x-y coordinates of the pointer 162. Unlike the control

point 12 in Hannaford, the planar sensor in Applicants' specification does not move along with the pointer 162 and lacks the complex mechanism described in Hannaford.

Claim 81 recites, among other things, a sensor having a stationary planar surface configured to measure at least one of a position or movement of the protrusion in contact therewith, wherein the protrusion moves with respect to the stationary planar surface. Claim 96 recites, among other things, a sensor having a stationary planar surface configured to be in contact with the protrusion and measure at least one of a position or movement of the protrusion when the protrusion is moved along the stationary planar surface. Claim 107 recites, among other things, measuring at least one of a position or a motion of a protrusion in contact with and moving with respect to a stationary planar surface of a sensor, wherein the protrusion is coupled to a manipulandum. As stated above, the control point 12 in Hannaford must move with the tool to detect the position of the tool in the x-y plane. Therefore, Hannaford does not teach a sensor having a stationary planar surface and that the protrusion moves with respect to the stationary planar surface. For at least these reasons, Hannaford does not teach each and every element and limitation in the Claims. Accordingly, Claims 81, 96 and 107 are allowable over Hannaford.

Claims 82-95, 97-106 and 108-111 are dependent on Independent Claims 81, 96 and 107, respectively. As stated above, Claims 81, 96 and 107 are allowable over Hannaford. Accordingly, Claims 82-95, 97-106 and 108-111 are allowable for being dependent on allowable base claims.

Conclusion

It is believed that this reply places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this reply is earnestly solicited.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please charge any additional required fee or credit any overpayment not otherwise paid or credited to our deposit account No. 50-1698.

Dated: 1/8/07

Respectfully submitted,

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